

unable and unwilling to ignore human rights abuses and political suppression anywhere in the world.

By limiting the amount of funds the United States provides to the Vietnamese Government pending a substantial and documented improvement in its human rights record, the United States will show its commitment to the promotion of freedom and democracy throughout the world. This bill will prohibit the provision of additional non-humanitarian funds unless the Vietnamese Government has released political prisoners, made progress on respecting freedom of religion, made progress on returning church properties, allowed the Vietnamese people access to U.S. refugee programs, made progress on protecting ethnic minority rights, and has held accountable any official who is found to have been complicit in the trafficking of humans.

The provisions of this legislation work to ensure that the Vietnamese Government halts any and all human rights abuses, while also respecting and ensuring the rights of its citizens. I believe that this legislation provides the necessary administrative outline that will allow the United States to pursue the best possible relationship with Vietnam and cement our position as an advocate of human rights in the realm of international affairs. The bill makes it the policy of the United States to actively promote democracy and freedom through educational exchanges, as well as offering refugee resettlement to all eligible nationals of Vietnam. This bipartisan resolution is a crucial step toward securing the promotion of freedom, democracy, and a respect for universal human rights in Vietnam, the United States and the world as a focal point of United States foreign policy.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3096, the Vietnam Human Rights Act of 2007, a bill which I am pleased to co-sponsor. Introduced by my good friend and colleague, Representative CHRIS SMITH of New Jersey, a champion of human rights in this House, this is an important measure which speaks to the deteriorating state of human rights in Vietnam.

After joining the World Trade Organization in January 2007, the politburo of the Vietnamese Communist Party (VCP) has carried out a large-scale brutal campaign of arrest against the nascent movement for democracy in Vietnam. Ignoring all international criticism and strenuous protests of the Vietnamese people, inside Vietnam and abroad, the communist regime in Hanoi has shamefully pushed ahead with its crackdown. Among others, the following events were particularly disconcerting to me:

On February 18, 2007, the second day of the Lunar New Year, which is the most sacred time in Vietnamese culture, the communist security forces raided Father Nguyen Van Ly's office within the Communal Residence of the Hue Archdiocese. Father Ly was later banished to a remote, secluded area in Hue.

On March 8, 2007, Reverend Nguyen Cong Chinch and his wife were brutally assaulted by security forces of Gia Lai Province in the Central Highlands, who then arrested Reverend Chinch on undisclosed charges.

Also on March 8, 2007, two prominent human rights activists and lawyers, Mr. Nguyen Van Dai and Ms. Le Thi Cong Nhan,

were arrested in Hanoi and were told that they would be detained for four months as part of an undisclosed investigation.

On March 9, 2007, Mr. Tran Van Hoa, a member of the People's Democracy Party in Quang Ninh Province, and Mr. Pham Van Troi, a member of the Committee for Human Rights in Ha Tay, were summoned by security forces and threatened with "immeasurable consequences" if they do not stop their advocacy for human rights in Vietnam.

Also on March 10, 2007, state security forces also raided the home of Ms. Tran Khai Thanh Thuy, a writer, on the grounds that she advocated for "people with grievances" against the government. They took away two computers, two cell phones, and hundreds of appeals that she had prepared for victims of the government's abuses.

On March 12, 2007, lawyer Le Quoc Quan, a consultant on local governance for the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, UNDP, and Swedish International Development Agency, was arrested in his hometown, Nghe An, less than a week after he returned from a fellowship at the National Endowment for Democracy in Washington, D.C. His whereabouts are unknown at this time.

On April 5, 2007, the Vietnamese authorities in Hanoi rudely prevented Congresswoman LORETTA SANCHEZ (D-CA) from meeting with several dissidents' wives at a gathering organized at the U.S. Ambassador's home. The police reportedly used very hostile and undignified manners to intervene in the meeting.

Furthermore, the Hanoi communist regime is still imprisoning many political dissidents and labor advocates such as Huynh Nguyen Dao, Truong Quoc Huy, Nguyen Tan Hoanh, Doan Huu Chuong, and more than 350 lay people of the Protestant churches in the Central Highland.

I share the concerns of the Vietnamese-Americans in my district, as well as all across the country, who are very angered and distressed by what they perceive as a new and aggressive plan of the Hanoi government to reverse the progress of human rights in Vietnam. It seems to me that the Vietnamese government is conducting this crackdown on advocates of human rights and religious freedom because it believes that the U.S. has no further leverage in the region. Now that Vietnam has been admitted to the WTO, and met with the Holy See, they believe they can respond in this brutal fashion to supporters of democracy and freedom and we will not respond.

Throughout my years in Congress, I have worked to foster human rights and religious freedom throughout the world. I have raised this issue with U.S. government officials often, especially since this recent crackdown, in an effort to pressure the Vietnamese government to stop persecuting its citizens. I believe the State Department should consider putting Vietnam back on the list of Countries of Particular Concern if the human rights situation in Vietnam does not improve. I believe that the State Department is failing the Vietnamese people struggling for human rights, and is not doing all that it can do to advocate on behalf of the Vietnamese people. The Vietnamese people should be able to choose their own leaders through free and fair elections and to use the Internet freely without censorship or restrictions.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a unanimous vote for passage of this legislation so that the Vietnamese people will know that the U.S. House

of Representatives stands in support of their freedom.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3096, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

#### COMMENDING THE FIRST DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS IN ACEH, A PROVINCE IN SUMATRA, INDONESIA

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 238) commending the first democratic elections in Aceh, a province in Sumatra, Indonesia, and expressing support for the further democratic development and implementation of the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

#### H. RES. 238

Whereas for three decades there has been a continuous armed conflict in Aceh, a province in Sumatra, Indonesia;

Whereas violence between the Indonesian military and the Free Aceh Movement has resulted in an estimated 15,000 deaths in the region;

Whereas the tsunami on December 26, 2004, killed at least 165,000 people in Aceh, devastated the landscape, and led to the loss of livelihood for 600,000 people;

Whereas the Government of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement signed a Memorandum of Understanding on August 15, 2005, in Helsinki;

Whereas the Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM), led by the European Union (EU), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Norway, and Switzerland, has supported the implementation of the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding successfully;

Whereas the Free Aceh Movement has demobilized its military troops and decommissioned its arms;

Whereas the Government of Indonesia has withdrawn its nonorganic military and police forces from Aceh;

Whereas the Law on the Governing of Aceh (LoGA) was signed into law by Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono on August 1, 2006;

Whereas the general life situation of the Acehnese has improved significantly since the signing of the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding and the Acehnese populate markets and celebrate festivities in public;

Whereas the first democratic and peaceful gubernatorial and district administrative

elections in Aceh were held on December 11, 2006, and more than 80 percent of entitled Acehnese voted; and

Whereas Irwandi Yusuf, a former leader of the Free Aceh Movement, won the gubernatorial election with the highest support of more than 38 percent of total votes: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commends the first democratic elections in Aceh, a province in Sumatra, Indonesia, in which the Acehnese have shown their strong commitment to democracy and peace, and congratulates Irwandi Yusuf, the first democratic elected governor of Aceh;

(2) expresses its ongoing support for the further democratic development of Aceh and the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Government of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement on August 15, 2005;

(3) encourages both parties to live up to their commitments under the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding, especially with regard to establishing a Human Rights Court for Aceh and a Commission of Truth and Reconciliation; and

(4) encourages the Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to commit resources in supporting the peace and building a strong civil society in Aceh.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from American Samoa.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the resolution being considered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from American Samoa?

There was no objection.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, again, I want to thank the leadership of our House Foreign Affairs Committee, the distinguished gentleman from California, Chairman TOM LANTOS, and our senior ranking member, Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN, for their support and their leadership in bringing this bill to the floor. I would also like to thank our distinguished colleague from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) for introducing this important resolution.

Mr. Speaker, on December 11, 2006, the Indonesian province of Aceh was host to one of the truly exceptional events in recent world history. Only 2 years after a devastating tsunami claimed some 165,000 lives of the people of Aceh, which is a province of Indonesia, and following three decades, almost 30 years, of violent conflict that ravaged this region, the courageous people of Aceh held peaceful and democratic elections. It was an inspiring testament to the human spirit.

More than 80 percent of eligible voters cast their ballots in this landmark

election. It signaled a new chapter in the lives of the beleaguered people of Aceh and served as a bold demonstration of the power of democracy and diplomacy throughout the world.

Diplomacy, Mr. Speaker. This election could not have taken place without the willingness of the Government of Indonesia and the armed fighters of the Free Aceh Movement to take the important step of choosing peace over violence to settle their differences. After decades of bloody battle, the two sides put down their arms and negotiated the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding on August 15, 2006.

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Mr. Speaker, we have seen it from Northern Ireland to South Africa and around the world. When government and rebel groups are finally willing to lay down their arms and come to the negotiating table, agreements previously thought not possible can suddenly come to fruition.

In addition to calling for elections, the Aceh Memorandum of Understanding also calls for the establishment of a Human Rights Court and a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, very similar to what happened in South Africa. It is important that these bodies be established without delay so that Aceh can begin to heal and then fulfill its potential.

In choosing to settle their dispute peacefully and committing to a democratic process, the Government of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement showed true leadership by putting the people of Aceh first. This resolution commends this bold choice and the elections that it produced, supports the full implementation of the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding, recognizes how far Aceh has come, and expresses hope for the future.

Mr. Speaker, I also would like to recognize the leadership of the President of Indonesia, President Susilo Yudhoyono. I know he played a most critical role in bringing about a peaceful solution to the province of Aceh. Just as in my recent discussions with him a couple of months ago, he had given promise that he is also totally committed to the full implementation of the autonomy law that was passed by the Indonesian Parliament to provide for greater democracy and self-rule for the people of West Papua. I know this issue is not related to the Aceh situation, but I do know it is connected to the fact that Jakarta or the Government of Indonesia is the government responsible for what has happened between these two provinces.

But I do want to give recognition to President SBY, as he is usually known in Indonesia, for his leadership and for his efforts in bringing finally to a peaceful solution the situation in the province of Aceh.

I fully support this resolution, and I ask my colleagues to support its passage.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume and rise in support of H. Res. 238, which commends the momentous Democratic elections held in Aceh, Indonesia this past December.

For decades, that region of northern Sumatra was caught in seemingly endless cycles of retribution. Separatist violence by the Free Aceh Movement, known as the GAM, provoked brutal crackdowns by the Indonesian military, and far too often it was the civilians in the middle who paid the price. That conflict and the mistrust of both sides appeared insurmountable.

Then, on December 26, 2004, an even more terrible tragedy struck the area. The Indian Ocean tsunami suddenly snuffed out over 165,000 lives in Aceh alone, devastated the coastline, and displaced hundreds of thousands more.

In January of 2005, within days of the tsunami, I visited the devastated coastline and the Banda Aceh aid center, along with the United States Navy crews who were providing water and logistical support from the USS *Abraham Lincoln* for humanitarian relief efforts.

It was a cataclysm of biblical proportions. But the immensity of the suffering it caused also diminished the relative significance of the political conflicts that had afflicted those communities for so long. Since then, we have seen progress towards democracy and reconciliation that would have not appeared possible beforehand.

The signing of the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding, the withdrawal of Indonesian troops and military from outside of Aceh, the demobilization of the GAM forces and the enactment of the law on the governing of Aceh were all and are very positive and hopeful signs.

Over 80 percent of the eligible Acehnese voters participated in last December's peaceful district and gubernatorial elections, and in an unmistakable sign of change, the former GAM leader, Irwandi Yusuf, was elected as governor.

Of course, the work of long-term reconciliation and building of a strong civil society will take time and continued cooperation from all parties. Thus, it is appropriate that this resolution encourages both sides to live up to their commitments under the Helsinki Memorandum, particularly with regard to establishing a Human Rights Court for Aceh and a Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Having personally witnessed the suffering of the Acehnese and the devastation of their homes and livelihoods following the tsunami, I am particularly hopeful that we are witnessing the springtime of democracy, peace and development in Aceh.

I want to thank Mr. CROWLEY for presenting us with this opportunity to congratulate the people of Aceh and the Government of Indonesia on the progress they have achieved so far.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as much as we recognize what has happened and is developing there in Indonesia, especially in this province of Aceh where great democratization or, I suppose, having a better relationship with the central government in Jakarta, there are a couple of things I want to share with my colleague.

That is not all. Indonesia happens to be the fourth most populous country in the world. Indonesia also is the largest, most populous Muslim country in the world, with some 223 million people there. And they are Sunni Muslims. I want to share that with my colleagues as a point of interest.

I think it was just last week that, if the media reports are accurate, Indonesia also just recently signed a \$1 billion arms trade agreement with Russia. That is a real twist there in terms of what is happening in the Asia-Pacific region and why this country ought not be neglected in terms of our interest and what we should be doing to work closely with the leaders of Indonesia or Jakarta, for that matter.

Indonesia is going through transition and some very serious problems. I indicated earlier about the serious problems it had had with the province of West Papua. West Papua is part of Indonesia. It was a former colony of the Dutch. Then the dictator, Suharto, by use of military force colonized West Papua again, if you want to put it in those terms.

The largest gold mining operation in the world happens to be in West Papua in this province in Indonesia. It is tremendously rich in terms of minerals and oil and all these things that are part of this country.

As much as I want to express that sense of hope that the resolution to some 30 years of war, this revolt between the people of Aceh and Indonesia, I just want to express a sense of concern to my colleagues that the situation in West Papua is still not clear, and I sincerely hope in the coming weeks and months that President Susilo Yudhoyono will be more forthcoming in terms of the commitment that he has made.

I want to thank the Government of Indonesia for allocating some \$2 billion, hopefully, finally, after some 50 or 60 years of not even giving the time of day for the needs of the people of West Papua, some \$2 billion to build an infrastructure, to provide better schools, better roads, better hospitals. I sincerely hope that President SBY will follow through with this commitment concerning the province of West Papua.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 238.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### CALLING ON GOVERNMENT OF PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA TO RELEASE CERTAIN PRISONERS AND END SUPPRESSION OF UYGHUR PEOPLE

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 497) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of the People's Republic of China should immediately release from custody the children of Rebiya Kadeer and Canadian citizen Huseyin Celil and should refrain from further engaging in acts of cultural, linguistic, and religious suppression directed against the Uyghur people, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

#### H. RES. 497

Whereas the protection of the human rights of minority groups is consistent with the actions of a responsible stakeholder in the international community and with the role of a host of a major international event such as the Olympic Games;

Whereas recent actions taken against the Uyghur minority by authorities in the People's Republic of China and, specifically, by local officials in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, have included major violations of human rights and acts of cultural suppression;

Whereas the authorities of the People's Republic of China have manipulated the strategic objectives of the international war on terror to increase their cultural and religious oppression of the Muslim population residing in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region;

Whereas an official campaign to encourage Han Chinese migration into the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region has resulted in the Uyghur population becoming a minority in their traditional homeland and has placed immense pressure on those who are seeking to preserve the linguistic, cultural, and religious traditions of the Uyghur people;

Whereas the House of Representatives has a particular interest in the fate of Uyghur human rights leader Rebiya Kadeer, a Nobel Peace Prize nominee, and her family as Ms. Kadeer was first arrested in August 1999 while she was en route to meet with a delegation from the Congressional Research Service and was held in prison on spurious charges until her release and exile to the United States in the spring of 2005;

Whereas upon her release, Ms. Kadeer was warned by her Chinese jailors not to advocate for human rights in Xinjiang and throughout China while in the United States or elsewhere, and was reminded that she had several family members residing in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region;

Whereas while residing in the United States, Ms. Kadeer founded the International Uyghur Human Rights and Democracy Foundation and was elected President of the Uyghur American Association and President of the World Uyghur Congress in Munich, Germany;

Whereas two of Ms. Kadeer's sons were detained and beaten and one of her daughters was placed under house arrest in June 2006;

Whereas President George W. Bush recognized the importance of Ms. Kadeer's human rights work in a June 5, 2007, speech in Prague, Czech Republic, when he stated: "Another dissident I will meet here is Rebiyah Kadeer of China, whose sons have been jailed in what we believe is an act of retaliation for her human rights activities. The talent of men and women like Rebiyah is the greatest resource of their nations, far more valuable than the weapons of their army or their oil under the ground.";

Whereas Kahar Abdureymim, Ms. Kadeer's eldest son, was fined \$12,500 for tax evasion and another son, Alim Abdureymim, was sentenced to seven years in prison and fined \$62,500 for tax evasion in a blatant attempt by local authorities to take control of the Kadeer family's remaining business assets in the People's Republic of China;

Whereas another of Ms. Kadeer's sons, Ablikim Abdureymim, was beaten by local police to the point of requiring medical attention in June 2006 and has been subjected to continued physical abuse and torture while being held incommunicado in custody since that time;

Whereas Ablikim Abdureymim was also convicted by a kangaroo court on April 17, 2007, for "instigating and engaging in secessionist" activities and was sentenced to nine years of imprisonment, this trial being held in secrecy and Mr. Abdureymim reportedly being denied the right to legal representation;

Whereas two days later, on April 19, 2007, another court in Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, sentenced Canadian citizen Huseyin Celil to life in prison for "splittism" and also for "being party to a terrorist organization" after having successfully sought his extradition from Uzbekistan where he was visiting relatives;

Whereas Chinese authorities have continued to refuse to recognize Mr. Celil's Canadian citizenship, although he was naturalized in 2005, denied Canadian diplomats access to the courtroom when Mr. Celil was sentenced, and have refused to grant consular access to Mr. Celil in prison;

Whereas a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson publicly warned Canada "not to interfere in China's domestic affairs" after Mr. Celil's sentencing; and

Whereas Mr. Celil's case was a major topic of conversation in a recent Beijing meeting between the Canadian and Chinese Foreign Ministers: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of the People's Republic of China—

(1) should recognize, and seek to ensure, the linguistic, cultural, and religious rights of the Uyghur people of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region;

(2) should immediately release the children of Rebiya Kadeer from both incarceration and house arrest and cease harassment and intimidation of the Kadeer family members; and

(3) should immediately release Canadian citizen Huseyin Celil and allow him to rejoin his family in Canada.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from American Samoa.